

# Contact Details



## Telephone Numbers

Main Switchboard 021 507 6300  
Specialised Donation Dept. 021 507 6320/93/97  
Fax 021 531 3335



## E-mail

phlebotomy@wcbs.org.za



## Website

www.wcbs.org.za



## Head Office Address

Western Cape Blood Service  
Old Mill Road, Pinelands, Cape Town 7405  
PO Box 79, Howard Place 7450



## WhatsApp

060 549 7244



## WCBS App

Download on Google Play or App Store



## Facebook

Like us on Western Cape Blood Service



## Twitter

Follow us on @The\_WCBS



## Instagram

Follow us on @thewcbs



## Youtube

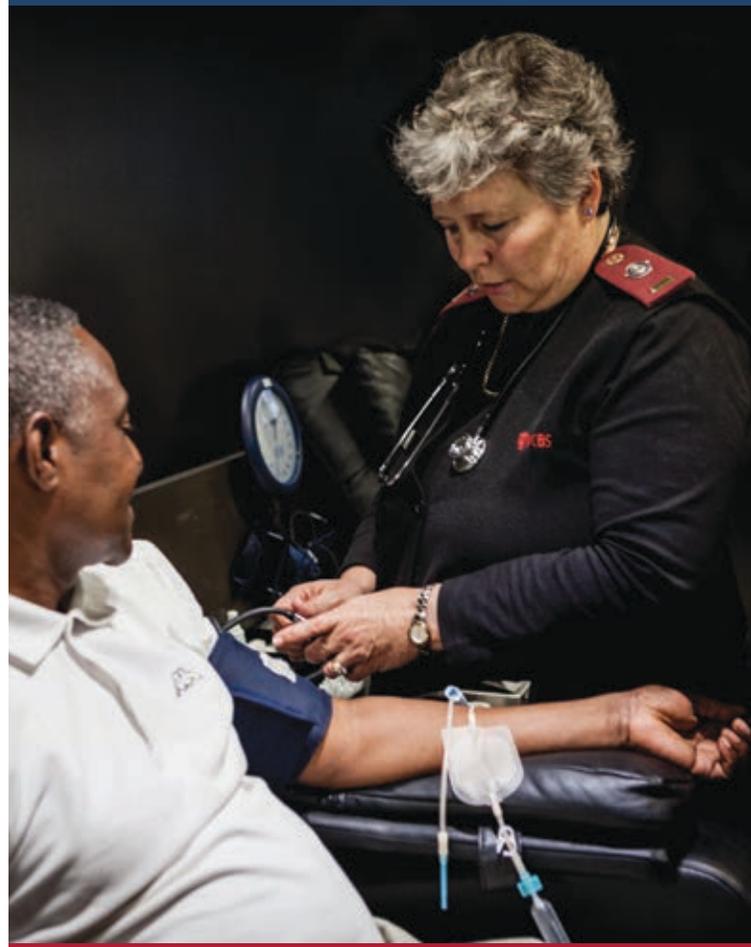
Subscribe to Western Cape Blood Service



## LinkedIn

Follow us on Western Cape Blood Service

# ALL ABOUT Therapeutic Phlebotomy



# What is therapeutic phlebotomy?

This refers to donating blood for the management of a medical condition that results in too much iron or too many red cells in your blood.

The procedure is exactly the same as regular blood donation, although you may be required to donate more frequently than other blood donors.

It is important for your doctor to provide the blood services with specific referral information in order to decide whether your blood can safely be used for transfusion to a patient.

## Why would I need therapeutic phlebotomy?

This is typically prescribed to reduce high levels of iron or red cells in the blood.

- High iron levels can be due to a variety of causes including hereditary haemochromatosis, a genetic abnormality that results in increased absorption of dietary iron from the gut. Excessive iron in the blood can cause damage if it is deposited in the liver, pancreas, heart and other organs.
- Phlebotomy also assists in reducing red cell counts, which can be elevated due to overproduction of cells in the bone marrow, or secondary to smoking, testosterone use or longstanding lung problems. Increased red cell counts can 'thicken' the blood making you more prone to blood clots that can result in heart attacks or strokes.

## How often do I need therapeutic phlebotomy?

This will depend on what your doctor prescribes. Your iron and red cell counts must be monitored by your doctor and the frequency of phlebotomy will be adjusted according to your response to the phlebotomy.

## Will my blood be given to patients?

The referral information from your doctor is carefully reviewed to make this decision. The majority of blood from therapeutic donors can be used. There are certain medical conditions, such as polycythaemia vera and high affinity haemoglobin, where your blood cannot be used in the general supply due to genetic abnormalities within the red cell.

## Are there costs involved?

- All therapeutic donors are charged for their initial phlebotomy and their first unit is discarded as per international regulations.
- Provided your blood can be used in our general supply thereafter, you will not be charged.
- If we are not able to use your blood, you will be informed and will be charged for each phlebotomy procedure and discard of the unit.

## Where does my phlebotomy take place?

We prefer all first-time therapeutic donors to have their first phlebotomy at our premises in Pinelands. Provided you tolerate this phlebotomy well and do not have any complicated underlying illnesses, your phlebotomy should continue at any mobile or fixed-site clinic in the future.

## How do I enrol as a therapeutic donor?



Please contact our Specialised Donation Department who will provide you with the referral form for your doctor to complete.



Once the completed form and supporting blood test results have been received, the information will be reviewed.



You will then be contacted to arrange an appointment for your first phlebotomy.

